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POEMS FOR L. S.

LOUIS GRUDIN

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1918

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POEMS FOR L. S.

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POEMS FOR L. S.

Morning (11)

Prayer (12)

Walls (13)

The Woolworth (14)

My People (15)

Song-Stuff (16)

Nocturne (17)

Prayer (18)

Completion (20)

Song (22)

The Chase (23)

Of Pain (25)

Song for Worship (26)

Lady (27)

Refugee (28)

Tides (29)

Memory (30)

Of One Girl (31)

First Love (33)

POEMS FOR L. S.

Warning (34)

Beggar (35)

Beginnings (36)

Age (37)

Salvage (39)

Poem for Lost Days (40)

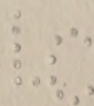
The Deep Heart (41)

Seagate (43)

Fruit-Bearing (46)

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POEMS FOR L. S.



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POEMS FOR L. S.

MORNING

Here in the beginning,
I go around the edges
Of worlds. O, do not
Shut me out.

PRAYER

We are built out of days.
Are not our souls a black heaven?
When the sun comes,
We live. May there be
Much light.

WALLS

Why do we love
Tall walls? Why do we build them?
What peace is there
In heights and distances? O my life,
Spilt out in little places.

THE WOOLWORTH

They will fashion their cities after you,
When there is peace,
Pale glory in the mist,
White waterfall of granite
From heaven.

MY PEOPLE

Here are we all
Stricken and blown about,
And made old
And yellow
With our days.

Here are our faces
Made heavy with flesh,
And our hearts
Fattened for death.
Here are our eyes
Made gray
With dust of hours.
Here are we also
Drawn thin as elm branches
After a wind.
Here our young
Grow old ahead of us.
Here our children
Are buried.

SONG-STUFF

Of what we sang at night,
What we heard
In a desert of avenues,
Where there are only
Stones and hearts,
Stones and hearts,

And brutal things, big things,
Dreams without laughter,
Fever without vision,
Crying of dry hearts,
Hearts and granite,
Hearts and granite,

Of where our hearts are,
Of them that ventured,

My heart goes crying
Immortally.

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NOCTURNE

Night rises about me like a sunset.
Under my window,
The city is like a dream
Full of stars. Walls with eyes that do
not blink,
Never.

And I am looking in the face
Of the dark; with the shadows of all things
My neighbors.
With my dead promises,
And the poems I have forgotten,
To sing me to death.

PRAVER

You have given
Days in a city,

Faces in a street,
Hours in a window,

Mornings that woke
Shouting from sleep,

And other things also,
Laughter in your houses,
The hands of many people,
Eyes to meet,
Words to give away,
White evenings, nights like flames
On your avenues,

And more than these, God,
What you gave afterward.

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Prayer

For my eyes, that were drowned
In gray days, for the fever
That left me a silence,
For the awful, unalterable things
You gave me to know,

Even for the sores
That came to my body,
And the sins that grew sick in it,
And all your desolate nights,
My prayer, God.

COMPLETION

A dismal song
For your shrunk loins and narrow breast,
 my friend,
And for my own weariness.

What has been done to us,
What has been drawn from us,
That we are so weak?

All gathered wealth, grown slowly,
The fulness between the shoulders,
The ripe heart,
Spent, thinned and withered.

O, what is so terrible,
After all things
That we have undergone?
Aching loins,
Eyes waiting for sleep; one lying
In quiet pain.

Completion

O, our thin bodies are full.
O, the days are gathered.
O, life is complete
In pain.

SONG

From the high storms
I come.
With the big winds
I will wake them.
All the little streets
Will whine.
All the windows
Will be shaken
Like drums.

THE CHASE

Songs, songs
Songs for you.

You cannot
Hide beyond them.

Waves,
High waves,
Long stretches of my heart,
To gather you around.

Songs, songs,
To wake you,
Songs, close
On your mouth, red songs,
Fierce songs,
To hold you struggling, songs seeking
Your eyes, songs
Laughing over you.

The Chase

Songs, songs,
Breathing deep,
Songs panting
After you, songs
To overcome you, songs
To hold you quiet, songs,
Hard songs, strong arms
In embrace.

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OF PAIN

I want to be strong.
I will be like a precipice,
Sheer and hard. And your beauty
Will be bruised sunlight
Against my heart.
I will be strong. I will cover over
All wounds.
When I am stronger than you,
Yellow-head, wild thing, witch,
You will love me.

SONG FOR WORSHIP

The curve of a lip
Is like the soft line
Of a vase. But a mouth made round
With passion, is a marvelous thing.
Deep eyes are only shadow.
But eyes wide with a dream
Are wonderful.

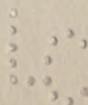
You are like a bronze
Of Rodin: passion
Cast into a body, filling it
With rhythm.

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LADY

Having found you, I have found
All love.

Following you, I have run
Past boyhood; Gray-eyes,
I will make you afraid.



REFUGEE

A new sky
Is around me.
I have crawled over
Dark tides.

I am tired,
O heavy throat, made light
With song, eyes clear,
After sorrows. I want to hide,
O music,
Voices,
Rhythm of arms.

O teasing winds
In stripped branches.

O cruel fingers
On wounds.



TIDES

We are rising together
On a wave. O, when we swing above
The crest, and are shattered foam
In a sea. We shall leave bubbles, sinking
In the dark hollow.

MEMORY

Where have they gone, our days?
Into a valley
In our eyes.

In our mouths,
On our foreheads.

OF ONE GIRL

Music that I heard
Was winds rocking,
Was dropping waves.

No echoes
Are in my heart.

Tunes I heard,
Hearts run wild,
Sunk hearts
Dragged under tides, young hearts
Without quiet.

In my heart there are
No tunes.

Loves I heard:
Agony of loves,
Close bodies, arms
Made weary,

Of One Girl

Hunger of love
Grown full;

And I heard lovers
Laughing,
Sweet women,
Dreamy in the morning.
And the new eyes of girls
In new shame.

O my heart,
Drawn thin.
O nude warm night, lonely
With one breath. O lovely wild one,
Gone with no touch
Of hands, nor smile, nor even
Dropping of eyes.

O days aching
With no song.

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FIRST LOVE

I have a long time
Of pain inside of my heart.

Having come upon you, girl
With gray eyes, I have come
On strange days.
I have born a wild thing
Inside my heart.

Life is not good,
That walks so slowly,
That is drawn out so long
Among our days.
Life is not good,
That sits like a city
Between us. I have fought
Past a storm to come near you.
I have gone a long way
To your house.

WARNING

For the sky,
A white sun; and for the sea,
A moon. Green foreheads of hills,
Are given a wind. So shall your face
Be caught by a passion; so shall your eyes
 be light,
Answering mine. What is beauty,
But a violin? And the singing
Is love. I will make loud
Your heart.



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BEGGAR

Be with me.
And seeing beauty, I will not go,
A beggar
For beauty not mine.
And music will not be
A weary cry.
And all love that passes, will not echo
Love that I was not given,
And a death that was left me,
And a heart crying,
And a sick night.

BEGINNINGS

We were awkward
Suddenly; for long moments
We were quiet, or laughed foolishly,
Letting go of ourselves, and telling
Among pauses, and the avoiding of eyes,
Many secrets.
Feeling we had done
Some great sin,
Some marvelous thing,
In sitting together,

Beyond a silence,
And shame.

AGE

I had a faith,
Knowing what was beautiful.
In the strange world,
Mists cleared.
I was bewildered
With new things.
Widening and embracing
New shores of life.

Life was a sequence I could never lose,
Even in disaster.

Life grew around itself,
Larger and wider, even
Upon broken life.

Life was a little ripple,
Spreading where God stirred
In a young heart.

Age

My heart widened.
A broader wave of life, that grew to you,
And wrapped you round.

SALVAGE

More than relics,
These. Wreckage,
Driftwood of song.
From the laden backs of a tide,
Drawing away
Unburdened.

Come and seek
Under the waters.

POEM FOR LOST DAYS

Each day we have had,
Ran in the flood
Of other days.
The stream is broken
Behind me: how
Shall I find you,
In a quiet place,
In a pause?

How remember,
You having gone?

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P87P6
1918
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THE DEEP HEART

Do we not see
The same days?
Facing the morning, our hands
Touch, but our hearts
Are bent away.
Your eyes are so wide:
Is the sky bluer
For you?

One day you hid tears from me.
From the world you hide
Many things.
You are deep
With secrets.

You love me to know,
To seek them out,
Lady, do you not?

The Deep Heart

You love me to know them,
Seeing you.

Gather me
Into your heart.

By night we have had
The same tears.
How have you met the morning?
Nothing is left
For me, in the morning.
My heart is washed clean; a high rock
After the tide.



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SEAGATE

O tired feet,
Lean heart,
Quiet.
O lean heart,
Yellow seabeach,
Burnt with days,
Lying at rest,
Ever.
Wrung clean
With thin seas.

* * *

I gave, not only
A dream,
And memory; not only
All I had; I gave
Also, a long cry
That could not reach you

Seagate

The wide-eyed nights.
Even a long sobbing
Like the waters that were prone
At the edge of the earth.
Even of a heart
Exhausted,
I gave.

Touch me
With your arms, because
I love.
Find me,
And my heart will be
A dawning sun.
A great wave rolling
From the sea.

* * *

As though my heart
Were clean; as though my eyes
Were like cool mornings.

Seagate

As though my heart
Were a night light with winds.

I am not any of these.

The sea has held you,
Pleading after
Your feet.
Bowed and prostrate, with white
 fingers
At your ankles.

* * *

You are alone
In your days, and I
Am alone also,
Lady with wet hair,
Near the sea.

FRUIT-BEARING

We are only more
Ourselves.

We have spread and grown,
Even to fruit-bearing.

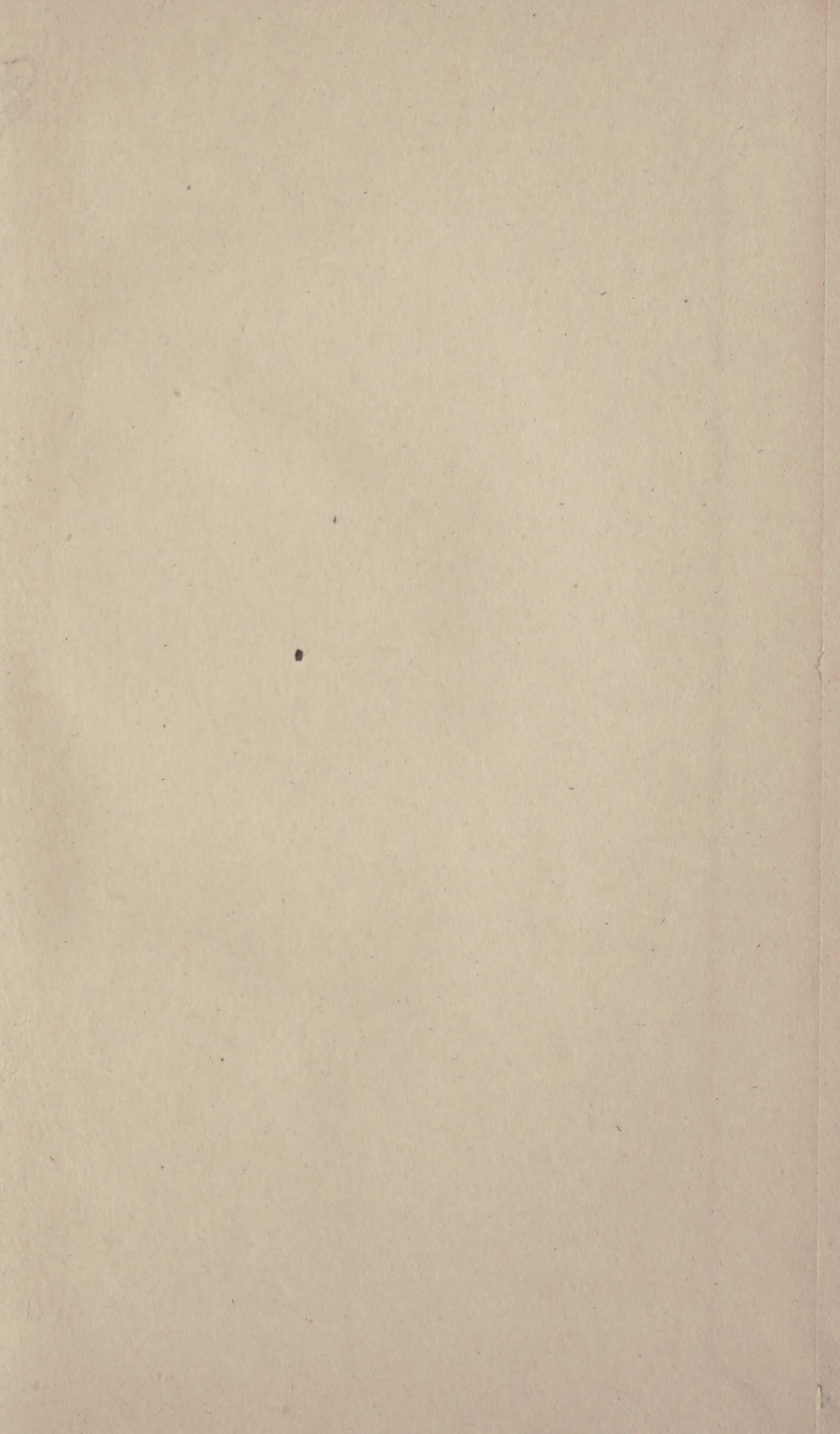
What shall we do
With wisdom, now
Having reached our age?
What shall we do with life,
Hoarded together?

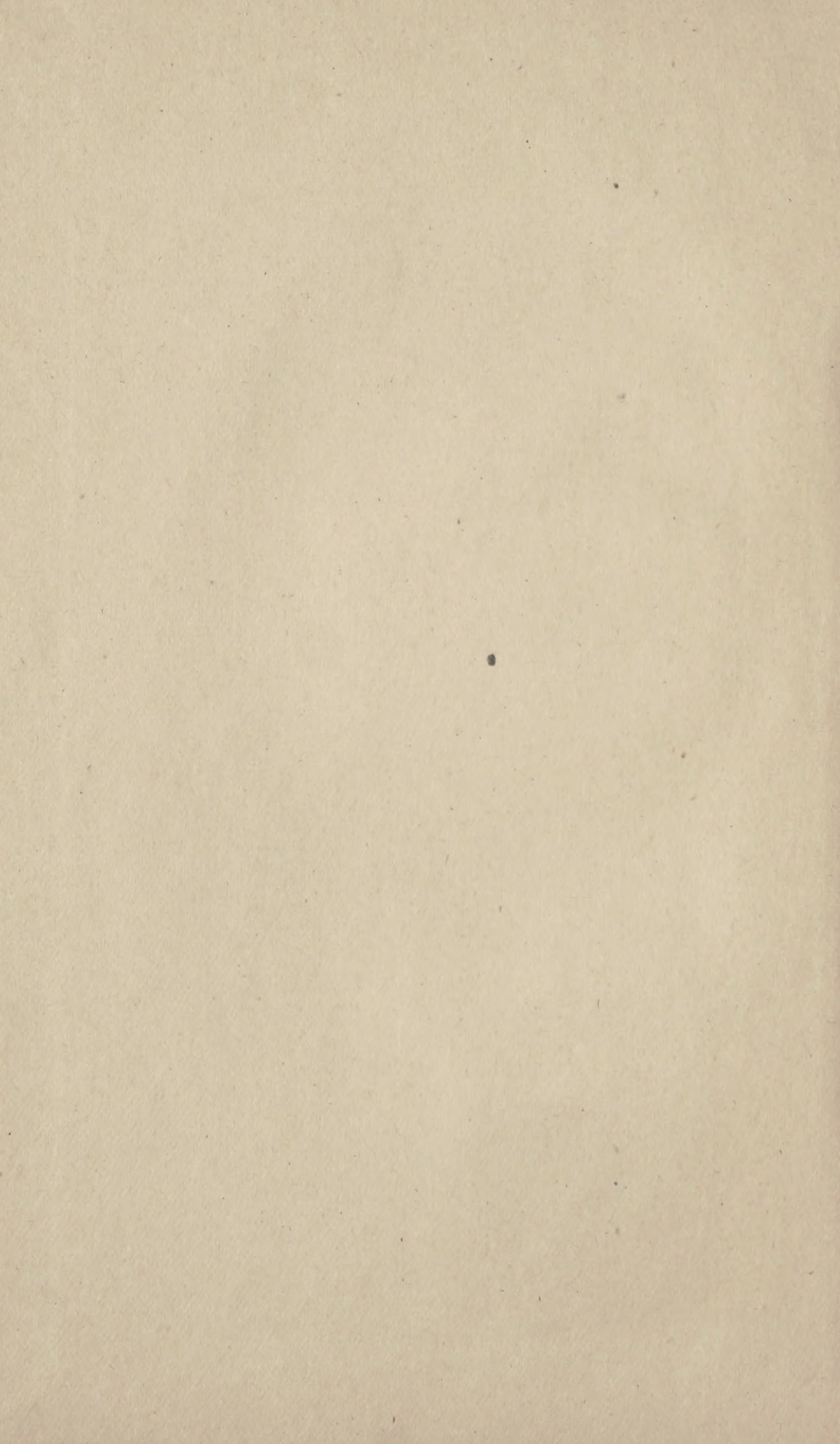
As though we are larger
Than ourselves. As though
Our lives would serve
Some purpose, greater
Than life.

Let us wither,
Having left seed.

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22





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